



Wednesday
November 24,
2010

Weekly Views

The Southbend Community Re-entry Center received an overall score of 99.5% during a recent audit by the American Correctional Association (ACA). The facility scored a perfect 100% on 33 mandatory standards established by ACA and 99.5% on 198 non-mandatory standards.

The Chain O' Lakes Men's Gospel Choir performed at the Albion Wesleyan Church located in Albion, Indiana. This is the third performance for the 10 member men's choir, who perform to show the community that people can change if given a chance. "It does wonders for the offenders to share their testimony, and songs to the community," shared Superintendent Michael Cunegin. "It's their way of giving back and healing."

The Indiana State Prison American Legion and Jaycee offender organizations each donated \$500 in support of the local Salvation Army. The donations will be used to purchase turkeys for local families in need and for the annual Thanksgiving meal served at the Salvation Army kitchen.

The Plainfield Correctional Facility will produce 20,000 servings of stuffing that will be sent to 43 Indianapolis area satellite locations as part of the annual Mozal Sanders Thanksgiving Dinner. For more than thirty five years, this cause has been bringing the holiday feast to needy families in Marion County.

Miami Correctional Facility held a facility IN Shape event, hosting an "Introduction to Zumba" class in the training building. A certified trainer donated her time to come in and show staff what this aerobic workout class is all about. Six people attended.

Branchville Correctional Facility completed its annual United Way/Perry County Food Coalition food drive with numerous items being donated to local food banks and charities.

The Reception-Diagnostic Center joined Lt. Governor Becky Skillman's Hoosier Cheer for Our Heroes campaign, and submitted more than 100 holiday cards to be sent to Hoosier troops!

The students at South Bend Juvenile took part in a fast-food fund raiser. The students voted on which charitable organization to donate the funds to, and selected Riley Children's Hospital. The profits donated from the food they purchased totaled \$135.99.

Three students from Madison Juvenile Correctional Facility assisted in Habitat for Humanity for a restorative justice project.

Ten units were successfully collected during a Blood Drive sponsored by the American Red Cross at the Pendleton Correctional Facility.

Westville Correctional Facility (WCC) hosted two graduation ceremonies. 97 offenders from the Therapeutic Community (TC) enjoyed an afternoon with friends and family as they celebrated their completion of the TC program. The TC welcomed back two alumni who shared their stories of success in continued sobriety, gainful employment and healthy relationships. 25 PLUS graduates also celebrated their accomplishments with invited guests. Both events were wonderful examples of the teamwork and dedication of the staff, and their commitment to the positive programming available at WCC.

A lot of positive things have been happening in PEN Products re-entry. Job Clubs were held for 40 offender workers at Westville Correctional Facility and PEN Products Central Office. Discussion topics dealt with employment retention, interviewing, and the 30 Second Elevator Speech. A 19 year former offender, who had worked several of those years with PEN, spoke to IREF residents about finding and maintaining meaningful employment.

In January 2011, the National Institute of Corrections will introduce their latest re-entry initiative that focuses on employment retention for ex-offenders. Indiana has once again been recognized for their innovative approach to offender re-entry by having two individuals selected for the initial team of fifteen. Doug Evans and Lisa Williams will represent the Indiana Department of Correction and PEN Products as part of this inaugural training.

Dr. John Zimmerman and Mary Engle, Prison Fellowship Directors, met with Superintendent Carneygee and other staff at the Correctional Industrial Facility to observe the PLUS and TC programs. After a tour of the facility they met and discussed some options for a Prison Fellowship Program.

Miami Correctional Facility hosted its fourth quarter Recall Meeting. More than 100 staff attended. Staff were shown a PowerPoint program on "Getting Back to the Basics". During the meeting, quarterly Leadership Awards were given out to custody staff, and Employee of the Month awards were announced.